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ABSTRACT

PROFESSOR SHINSHIRO EBASHI OF THE UNIVERSITY OF TOKYO DISCUSSES OUTDOOR EDUCATION IN JAPAN, ESPECIALLY IN RELATION TO LEGISLATION (E.G., THE SPORT PROMOTION LAW OF 1961) AND PROGRAMS ENDORSED BY THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION. A TYPICAL OUTDOOR EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR JUNIOR-HIGH STUDENTS IS GIVEN. ALSO DISCUSSED ARE THE PROGRAMS OF THE ALL JAPAN SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS CAMP AND THE LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAMS. TRENDS IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION ARE OUTLINED, AND A BROAD OVERVIEW OF THE SUBJECT IS PRESENTED. INCLUDED AT THE END OF THE DOCUMENT IS A LISTING OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS IN JAPAN AND THE OUTDOOR ACTIVITY FACILITIES AVAILABLE IN EACH DISTRICT. (DB)

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NEW JERSEY STATE SCHOOL OF CONSERVATION
Branchville, New Jersey

OUTDOOR EDUCATION AND CAMPING IN JAPAN

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[1967]

The term "Outdoor Education" is comparatively new in the field of education in Japan. However, after the War II, along with the development of industrialization urbanization and the increase of leisure, the number of people who are enjoying nature and outing activities has increased. At the same time school camping and outdoor education, although not required in the curriculum, is gaining in popularity in public schools and teacher training institutions.

Since the enactment of the Sport Promotion Law in 1961, the number of outdoor education and camping facilities established by the prefectural and municipal education department are increasing so that schools under their administration may use them on a rotation basis. Summer school at the seaside or in the mountains has also recently come into vogue.

According to the Sport Promotion Law (Law No. 141, June, 1961) the term of sport is defined as follows:

"Sports as used in this Law shall activities such as athletics, games and physical exercises (including camping and other outing activities) that are performed for the purpose of promoting the sound development of body and mind. (Article 2)".

In other words, sports means not only athletics or competitive activities, but also includes various kinds of outing activities, such as hiking, camping, cycling, hosteling, sea bathing, canoeing, boating, yachting, skiing and skating, etc.

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Moreover, for popularizing and encouraging outdoor activities throughout the country, the following article is included in this Law:
"In order to popularize and encourage such outdoor activities as hiking, cycling, camping and other activities performed for the sound developments of mind and body, the state and local public agencies shall endeavor to take necessary steps, such a s constructing trails and establishing camping sites".

Though this Law is set up from the view point of improving the nation's physical fitness, it is also encouraging positive attitudes towards understanding and appreciation of nature as well as enjoying such outing activities. Besides this Sport Promotion Law, National Nature Park Law and Regulations on Prefectural Park have been established to provide various types of facilities. (see page 8)

1. Outdoor Education Programs in Public Schools. In several big cities, outdoor education programs for public schools have been developed recently. For example, Rokko Outing Activities Center in Rokko Mt. near Kobe city is becoming an outdoor education center for public school groups and various kinds of youth's groups. Osaka Outdoor Activities Center near Osaka city is also utilized for public school outdoor education programs throughout the year. Tanzawa Outdoor Education Center, in the Tanzawa Prefectural Park is a center for Yokohama city public school students (from 7th to 9th grade). It was established in 1959 and opened in June of that year. About 3,000 junior high school students

had outdoor education experiences for the first year. Though it has only one main building (administration and shelter for rainy day) it is opened from June to September, over 4,500 junior high school students attended during this school year. A typical program is as follows:

1st day.

8.00	Leave school
11.00	Arrive Genkura by bus
11.10	Leave Genkura
13.00	Arrive at the center by walking
13.30	Orientation
14.00	Setting up tents and unpacking
16.00	Preparation and eating evening meal
19.00	Singing
20.00	Camp fire
22.00	Light out

2nd day.

6.00	Get up Flag raising and morning assembly
6.30	Breakfast
8.00	Free time
9.00-10.20	Activities by group(arts & crafts, nature study, collection, singing in the outdoors)
10.30-11.50	Activities II
12.00-14.00	Luncheon and free time
14.00-16.00	Nature walk
16.00-18.00	Dinner(outdoor cooking)
19.00-20.00	Night Activity(How to know the direction in the night)
20.00-21.00	Star gazing
22.00	Light out

3rd day.

6.00	Get up and morning assembly
6.30-8.30	Breakfast
9.00-9.30	Pack and clean up camp site
9.30-10.00	Summation
10.00	Leave camp site
12.00	Arrive Genkura by walking
12.30	Leave Genkura
15.30	Arrive school by bus

Though number of schools attending is increasing and many students are having quite worthwhile outdoor living experiences, the following observations are made:

1. It takes over 4 hours from school to camp site.
2. It is too short a time to cover the areas of outdoor education.
   (2 nights and 3 lays)
3. Having experience of outdoor cooking is good, but there are some difficulties in rainy weather and it takes a long time to prepare three meals a day.

2. All Japan Senior High School Students Camp. This camp is very unique in Japan, because it is sponsored by the Yomiuri Press Co. and entorsed by the Ministry of Education. It started in 1951. The two most outstanding senior high school students are chosen from each prefecture with recommendations from the local board of education (There are 46 prefectures in Japan, so about 100 students participate every year).

The objectives of this camp are as follows:

a. To foster leadership, fellowship and friendship through outdoor group living.
b. To promote on exchange of ideas and promote mutual understanding among senior high school students throughout Japan.
c. To foster positive attitudes towards an appreciation and understanding of nature.
d. To develop skills for outdoor living and outdoor recreation.
e. To develop a sound body and mind through outdoor living.

The students live one week in an army tent divided into 8 groups with supervision from councelors who were former campers at this camp. The program content varys every year because the camp site is changed.

However, it usually includes such activities as arts, camp crafts, camp fire, group discussions, group singing, games, nature study, nature hikes, outdoor cooking, swimming, skits, etc. Highlights of this camping experience are to hear lectures on present issues of international and national topics by editorial writers from the Press and long distance hiking as well as the farewell camp fire. When they held the camp at the Lake Tanuki, at the foot of Mt. Fuji in 1954, every boy had the experience of climbing the Mt. Fuji.

One excellent boy who was selected by the screening committee sent to the United States for attending Camp Rising Sun, an international camp, in Rhinebeck, New York. Though only selected senior high school students can participate in this camp, it stimulates various camps at the prefectural level and students who participate in this camp work as councelors at local camps.

To find a suitable camp site for 100 students is a big problem since this camp is held at different places every year. Setting up a permanent residential type of camp facility is urgently needed.

3. <u>Leadership Training</u>. As outdoor education and school camping become more popular, leadership training is more emphasized throughout the country. The Ministry of Education and local Education Departments are sponsoring short training courses in outdoor education for school teachers and youth leaders and the Ministry of Education published a manual of Organized Camping in 1959. Besides these public agencies, private organizations, such as National Recreation Assoication of Japan, Youth Hostel Association of Japan and Joint Recreation Institute of YMCA and YWCA also provide short training courses for organized camping

and outdoor education for a week. In Yokohama city, teachers who are going to school camping with students are required to participate in a short training course in outdoor education, 2 days practice in the Tanzawa Outdoor Education Center beforehand. This is sponsored by the City Education Department.

There are not very many teacher training institutions having outdoor education and camping courses, however, the Department of Outing Activities, School of Health and Physical Education, Tokyo University of Education, has just started such a course in 1966 and physical education major students, attending the School of Education, University of Tokyo, are required to take a course in outdoor education and camping. They have an organized camping experience for a week in the summer and skiing in the winter.

Trends.

1. The number of students who participate in school camping and outdoor education is increasing every year.
2. Program content is getting broader and understanding and appreciation of nature and conservation is becoming important phase as well as outdoor group living and skills for outing activities.
3. Local Education Departments are trying to develop their own camping sites and facilities for public school use.
4. The number of teacher training colleges requiring outing activities is increasing and various short training courses for organized camping and outdoor education are being held annually both public and private agencies.
5. Some big industries are providing organized camping experiences for their own youth workers.

6. Youth Hostel movement is a growing field in Japan and every prefecture government is providing Youth Centers in natural setting for youth groups. Camping Association of Japan was just organized in 1966.

Conclusions

Outdoor education is explained by Dr. J. Smith and others as follows: "Outdoor education is a means of curriculum enrichment through experiences in and for the outdoors. It is not a separate discipline with described objective like science and mathmatics; it is simply a learning climate which offers opportunities for direct laboratory experiences in identify and resolving real life problems, for acquiring skills with which to enjoy a lifetime creative living, for attaining concepts and insights about human and natural resources and for getting us back in touch with these aspects of living where out roots were once firmly established."

However, outdoor education is a comparatively new field and it includes broad areas. There is some confusion among educators and the general public. Outdoor education is teaching process in the outdoors and a method of teaching closely related with nature and national heritage. Therefore, outdoor education should emphasize an unterstanting of nature and living things (nature study and ecology), appreciation of nature and conservation (Keep beautiful of our land and environment), improvement of skills of various outing activities (outdoor recreation) and attitude formation through outdoor group living. Of course, outdoor education relates to all subject matter in the curriculum, however, it needs some focal point of integration.

Number of Outing Activities Facilities

(Ministry of Education, 1965)

	camp site	public beach	boating area	skiing course	ice skate rink	rifle shooting range
Hokkaido District	67	58	75	172	109	13
Tohoku District	101	76	56	164	6	42
Kante District	145	71	107	41	64	18
Tokyo District	21	1	23	0	11	1
Chubu District	368	177	403	133	61	47
Kansai District	113	101	145	31	16	9
Chugoku District	93	128	49	54	3	3
Shikoku District	45	56	25	10	2	1
Kyushu District	168	109	130	1	5	8
Total	1,121	855	1,044	668	282	176